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A MANUAL
OF
ENGLISH PROSODY

R. F. BREWER, B.A.

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INTRODUCTION

TO

THE STUDY OF POETRY.

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A MANUAL

OF

ENGLISH PROSODY:

BEING AN

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF POETRY.

WITH QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES.

BY

ROBERT FREDERICK BREWER, B.A.

First English Master in the High School,
Liverpool Institute.

LONDON:
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1869.

302. g. 64.

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PREFACE.

THIS LITTLE WORK is designed as an initiatory course to the study of English Poets. After attempting to give clear notions of the nature and different kinds of poetry, it proceeds to explain and illustrate the various peculiarities of the forms it assumes, and concludes with an exposition of the figures of speech.

The writer has been induced to undertake the compilation of the work because nothing of the sort, as far as he is aware, has hitherto been published, and for many years he has felt the need of some such treatise whilst preparing boys for the English section of the Oxford and Cambridge Local Examinations. Something appeared to him to be required to bridge over the space between the study of Grammar proper and its amplifications in standard literature, especially now that the study of our own classic authors, the poets and dramatists in particular, is an essential part of the curriculum of every good school.

The grateful acknowledgments of the writer are due to the Rev. S. CLARK, M.A., to whose admirable lectures on Shakspere he is indebted for much that these pages contain.

High School,
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PROSODY.

PROSODY (from *προσῳδία*, accent) is concerned with the technicalities of poetry.

Poetry (*ποίησις*, from *ποιέω*, to make), in its widest sense, means invention or creation. A *poet* is literally a maker; and in Lowland Scotch he is so called still. The French word *trouvère*, or troubadour (from *trouver*, to find), means precisely the same. These terms, however, are only properly applied where truth and beauty are the objects of creation. The inventor of the sewing machine, for instance, would never be considered a poet; though the sculptor of the 'Dying Gladiator,' the painter of the 'Transfiguration,' the author of 'David Copperfield,' undoubtedly would. The art of the true poet is to represent perfect truth and beauty, distinct from the evil that is ever mingled with the good, in nature; and though the imperfect is admitted, it is only for the sake of contrast, or because the two are often inseparable, or, as in satirical poetry, the same end is attained by deepening the shades of the bad. Poetry, then, is the result of a divinely bestowed faculty, operating upon the infinite resources of nature, creating new forms of the beautiful by combinations of existing materials, through the aid of the imagination. And this art may be carried even beyond nature in odd particulars: a statue may be more perfect in form than any individual that has ever lived, it being modelled after the excellences of scores of types; a poet may endow a fictitious hero with more virtues and fewer weaknesses than have ever been found in any one human being; and yet these are only beautiful creations, in so far as they are true to nature. Man can create, but he cannot soar beyond his own Creator; his highest efforts are only attempts to produce the ideals

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of Him who pronounced all His works good and perfect. It matters not in what form these ideals are presented to us; whether in marble, in colours, or in words, the work accomplished is poetry in its most inclusive sense.

The word poetry, however, is generally restricted to compositions in which *words* are the materials employed. Language is undoubtedly the mightiest instrument the poet can wield; it may frequently fail him in expressing all he feels and wishes to say, but there is a vitality about it which the stone and the canvas cannot represent.

What fine chisel ever yet cut breath?

The painter might depict to us poor Lear raving over his dead Cordelia, but he could not portray the intensity of feeling that seemed on the point of bursting its frail tenement, hit off in these simple words, 'Pray you undo this button.' The sculptor may create out of crude stone a manly form, writhing in tortures for some noble cause, but he could not convey to our minds the hope that animates the sufferer,—'for though the body dies, the soul shall live for ever.'

We must now distinguish poetry from *prose*; although there is frequently much more real poetry in prose than in what goes under the other name. Poetry differs from prose both in *matter* and in *form*. It appeals to our imagination and feelings, rather than to the understanding; its object is to please, refine, and elevate, rather than to instruct. As, however, much prose does this too, we must look to the *form* for the real difference between them.[1]

Poetry is distinguished from prose by metre and rhythm.

Rhythm is the undulation of sound produced by the alternation of accented and unaccented syllables.

Metre is the measure of rhythm. (See page 12.)

Accent, i. e. the stress laid upon a particular syllable or syllables of a word in pronouncing it, is the distinguishing feature of rhythm

[1] As this is a treatise on prosody, it deals only with the *form* of poetry, although the writer has thought fit to point out the broad distinctions given above. To enter into that very intricate question, as to what constitutes poetry with respect to its subject-matter, would be out of place here.

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in English poetry, as *quantity* is in classical poetry. Quantity is the length of time occupied in uttering a syllable, a short one being considered half the length of a long one. These two are often confounded, but the distinction between them is clearly seen in much English versification; e. g.

But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,
The hoarse rough verse should like the torrent roar;
When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
The line too labours, and the words move slow.—*Pope.*

This distinction will be more fully illustrated further on, under the head Classic Metres.

Besides rhythm, the essential difference, there are certain other variations, which are occasionally made use of as embellishments, distinguishing poetry from prose: these are *rhyme*, *alliteration*, and *parallelism*.

Rhyme is the identity in two lines of poetry of the last accented vowel sound and what follows it, with a difference in the sounds preceding it. Rhymes are either *single*, *double*, or *triple*; as, kill, still; billow, pillow; tenderly, slenderly.

It was introduced into our poetry in the sixteenth century, and for a long time was looked down upon by the scholars of the age as a barbarous innovation. Sydney, Ben Jonson, and Milton were strong in their censure of it, although each of them employed it. Our language, however, has so few rhyming words that it can never become an essential to English versification; still the sweet jingle it has will always cause it to be regarded as an important element in the music of our poetry.[1]

[1] The number of English words forming perfect rhymes is so small that, even in the best poets, we often meet with very imperfect ones, such as hear, pair; prove, love; flood, brood; face, rays, &c. Rhyme depends upon sound, and not upon identity of letters; e. g. rough, through; wreath, breath, would be inadmissible as rhymes. Such pairs as I, eye; lyre, liar, are *assonances*, not rhymes. In some of our

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Alliteration is the frequent recurrence of the same sound at the beginning of words or syllables in the same verse; it is the chief characteristic of Anglo-Saxon and early English poetry: e. g.

> The bookful blockhead, ignorantly read,
> With loads of learned lumber in his head.
>
> *Pope.*
>
> How high his highness holds his haughty head!
> Begot by butchers, but by bishops bred.

Parallelism consists in repeating in the second line, with some slight modification, the thought expressed in the first. It is the chief characteristic of Hebrew poetry, and is but rarely employed in English; e. g.

> Tell it not in Gath,
> Publish it not in the streets of Ascalon;
> Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,
> Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.
>
> 1 *Kings* i. 20.

---

satirical writers we occasionally find the most comical combinations to form rhymes, designed no doubt to add to the fun of the piece; e. g.

> And pulpit, drum ecclesiastic,
> Beat with fist instead of a stick.
>
> *Butler.*

> Having once reached the summit, and managed to cross it, he
> Rolls down the hill with uncommon velocity.
>
> *Barham.*

> Grown blind, alas! he'd
> Some prussic acid,
> And that put him out of his pain.
>
> *Ibid.*

> Sun, moon, and thou vain world, adieu,
> That kings and priests are plotting in;
> Here doomed to starve on water gru-
> el, never shall I see the U-
> niversity of Gottingen,
> niversity of Gottingen.
>
> *Gifford.*

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KINDS OF POETRY.

The earliest literary compositions are rhythmical. Long before the art of writing was invented, rude songs of war and love, hymns to the gods, and especially to Bacchus, were composed and handed down by tradition. We find bards or poets amongst all nations when emerging from a state of barbarism, whose duty it was to sing these traditionary odes as occasions called for them, and to celebrate the achievements of heroes, and great national events of their own age, in original compositions. Nearly all our knowledge of the early history of nations is derived from this source. In course of time these *lyrical* poems were strung together, and committed to writing, with narrative verses interspersed, in order to give a unity to the collection; hence the origin of *Epic* Poetry. On great national festivities, the celebration of the deeds of past heroes, and of their gods, was of the first importance. A rude stage was erected, and performers, fantastically dressed, chanted these national odes in chorus. After a while, in order to vary the entertainments, soliloquies and dialogues were introduced; hence the rise of the *drama*.

The different kinds of poetry are as follow :—

(1) **Lyric Poetry**, which was so called because it was originally intended to be sung, and accompanied on the lyre. We find the earliest specimens of it in the Old Testament, such as Miriam's and Deborah's songs, and David's elegy on Saul and Jonathan. Lyric poetry is of several kinds—

(*a*) **The Ode** (ᾠδή, a song). The Greek choral odes, upon the model of which many in our own language are constructed, consisted of stanzas arranged in groups of three; the *strophe*, to be chanted by one-half of the singers, the *antistrophe* by the other half, and the *epode* by the whole. In our own tongue we have odes upon a variety of subjects, heroic, sacred, moral, and amorous. Perhaps the finest of all is Dryden's *Alexander's Feast*.

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Gray, Collins, Campbell, Shelley, and Wordsworth are the authors of almost equally fine specimens. In the composition of odes the moderns have succeeded less than in any other kind of versification.

(*b*) **The Ballad,** i. e. a song. Ballads are distinguished from songs proper by the fact of their containing a narrative. Love and war are the two chief subjects of ballads. *Chevy Chase*, the *Robin Hood* ballads, *John Gilpin*, *Edwin and Angelina*, and *Lucy Gray* may be taken as good specimens.

(*c*) **The Hymn and Song.**—The only difference between these is that the former is always on some sacred subject. Each is generally nothing more than the expression of some single sentiment. Bishop Ken, Bishop Heber, Dr. Watts, Cowper, and Keble are the authors of some of our most beautiful hymns. To enumerate our song writers would be to name all our poets, though Moore and Burns have, perhaps, written more than any others. Dibdin requires especial mention for his sea songs.

(*d*) **The Elegy.**—This differs from other odes only in its subject being always mournful. Gray's celebrated *Elegy written in a Country Churchyard*, Milton's *Lycidas*, Collins's *Dirge in Cymbeline*, and Tennyson's *In Memoriam* are fine specimens.

(2) Epic or Heroic Poetry.—This term is applied only to great and lengthy narrative poems, in which, however, there is something of the dramatic, detailing some important national enterprise, or the adventures of a distinguished hero. The chief epics of all nations are, the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, the *Æneid*, *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained*, the *Lusiad*, and *Jerusalem Delivered*. These great works are distinguished as *Classical Epics*.

To the same class, but differing from the above in their narrating less dignified undertakings, and these being fictitious, as well as in a want of unity of purpose, belong the **Romantic Epics,** such as the *Orlando Furioso*, the

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Divine Comedy, the *Faerie Queene*, and the *Idylls of the King*.[1]

Scott's *Lady of the Lake*, *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, *Marmion*, &c., Moore's *Lalla Rookh*, Longfellow's *Hiawatha*, &c., though scarcely dignified enough to be considered epics, fall under this head as **Poetical Romances.**

Butler's *Hudibras*, Burns's *Tam O'Shanter*, &c. differ from the above only in the burlesque element they contain.

(3) Dramatic Poetry.—The word *drama* (δρᾶμα) means action, and the term dramatic poetry is applied to that species of composition which is made up of *dialogue*, and which is, for the most part, intended to be acted. All dramatic poems, however, are not intended for representation; e. g. Bayley's *Festus*, Taylor's *Philip von Artevelde*; and even many of Shakspere's plays are more suited to the study than the stage.

For the origin of the drama we must look to ancient Greece: there, we have seen above, the theatre arose out of the national custom of singing odes in praise of gods and heroes on festive occasions, soliloquies and dialogues being gradually introduced to vary the exhibitions.

The word **Tragedy** (τραγωδία, literally the *goat-song*), takes its name from the fact that the actors who sung and danced at these entertainments were dressed as satyrs. **Comedy** (κωμωδία, a festive or revel song) was originally applied to those rude, comic verses, mixed with extempore witticisms, which were indulged in by bands of revellers at vintage festivities. In course of time men of genius began to avail themselves of the opportunities which the drama afforded, and which no other species of composition then afforded, for national instruction; and we soon find plays more regularly constructed, and containing a plot. Under Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes, the drama was carried to its utmost perfection. Tragedy

[1] Byron's *Childe Harold* and *Don Juan* may be considered as Romantic Epics quite as well as purely descriptive poems.

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was designed to arouse the sympathies and pity of the audience for heroism and suffering virtue; comedy, by its ridicule, turned the laugh of the hearers against the foibles and vices of the age. The difference between a Greek play and a modern one will be clearly seen by comparing Milton's *Samson Agonistes*, which is composed after the Greek model, with any of Shakspere's plays.

The **Modern Drama** arose about the latter half of the sixteenth century. It grew out of the rude *Mysteries* or Miracle plays, and *Moralities* or Moral plays, which we find in existence about the end of the middle ages. The former were coarse, profane burlesques founded upon Scripture narratives, the Deity himself being frequently introduced; the latter consisted of quaint dialogues, and frequently of furious disputes between characters personating abstract virtues and vices, the devil being the important one, as he always overcame the vices, and carried them off at last. *Interludes* occupy an intermediate place between the Moralities and modern comedy; Heywood's *Four P's* may be taken as a fair specimen of them. One of the earliest comedies is *Gammer Gurton's Needle*,' and the earliest tragedy is Sackville's *Ferrex and Porrex*, both written in the early part of Queen Elizabeth's reign. Soon after this Greene, Marlowe, and especially Shakspere, raised the drama to its highest excellence.

In the classic drama, (and the French theatre is constructed upon that model), what are called the *unities* are preserved, i. e. a unity in time and place; but Shakspere refused to be confined by any such arbitrary limitations, although, as in the *Tempest*, he has shown himself quite able to observe them when it suited his purpose.[1]

[1] The English drama is called *Gothic* as distinguished from the classic drama. Besides differing in respect to the unities, the distinction between tragedy and comedy is rigidly observed by the ancients, while in Shakspere the elements of the two frequently are found side by side. It is a mark of the highest genius to depict skilfully those phases of human life in which the sublime and the ludicrous are indissolubly

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The distinction between a modern tragedy and comedy is, that the former has always a mournful termination, the latter a happy one.

> 'The very purpose of playing both at the first, and now, was, and is, to hold as 'twere the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure.'—*Shakspere.*

(4) Descriptive Poetry.—Description enters into every kind of poetical composition, but there are some poems that are purely descriptive. To this class belong Drayton's *Polyolbion*, Thomson's *Seasons*, Denham's *Cooper's Hill*, Pope's *Windsor Forest*, Goldsmith's *Traveller* and *Deserted Village*, &c. Perhaps the finest specimens in the language are Milton's *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*.

Pastoral is a species of Descriptive poetry. It consists of descriptions of rural life and scenery, of the simplicity and loves of shepherd swains and village maids. Shenstone, Collins, and many others of our early poets have written beautiful specimens of it; the finest example in English is Shenstone's Pastoral ballad. It is rarely attempted by modern poets, perhaps because much of the charming simplicity of country life has disappeared from amongst us.

(5) Didactic Poetry.—Under this head are included all poems the prime object of which is *to instruct*, whether in arts, morals, or philosophy. Tusser's *Hundred Points of good Husbandrie*, Armstrong's *Art of Preserving Health*, Pope's *Essay on Criticism* and *Essay on Man*, Young's *Night Thoughts*, Blair's *Grave*, Akenside's *Pleasures of the Imagination*, and most of Cowper's poems, are of this kind. The finest didactic poem in English is Wordsworth's *Excursion*.

Satirical Poetry is a species of didactic, as its object is to improve manners and promote real virtue by depicting

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blended; and this our great dramatist has accomplished with a truth and power that has never been equalled. Numerous instances of this might be adduced from the plays of Hamlet and Lear.

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vice in its true colours, and by holding up to ridicule hypocrisy and cant. Dryden, Pope, Butler, Dean Swift, Burns, and Tom Hood are our most famous satirical poets. Pope's *Dunciad* and Hood's *Ode to Rae Wilson* may be taken as fine, though widely differing, specimens.

(6) The Sonnet.—This is a short poem of fourteen lines, which was introduced into our language from the Italian by the Earl of Surrey in the reign of Henry VIII. It is always in iambic pentameter and in rhyme. The rhymes have a somewhat complicated arrangement; sometimes there being no more than four different ones in the whole poem, and seldom more than six. From this it will be seen that the sonnet is the most artificially constructed of all our poems, the poet being restricted both in metre, rhyme, and length. Besides this, it must be complete in itself: its subject-matter must be of such a nature that it can be exhausted even in so short a compass. Although Shakspere and Milton frequently made use of it, and embodied some of their most beautiful thoughts in this form, it continued to be looked down upon by English writers as an alien, unsuited to our northern tongue, and too crippling to the airy fancy of the poet. It is to Wordsworth that we owe the uprooting of these prejudices, and the high position which the sonnet now holds in poetry. He speaks of it as 'the key with which Shakspere unlocked his heart,' 'the small lute that gave ease to Petrarch's wounds,' 'the glowworm lamp that cheered mild Spenser,' and continues, that

> When a damp
> Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand
> The thing became a trumpet, whence he blew
> Soul-animating strains—alas! too few.

Wordsworth's own beautiful specimen contains all that can be said on the subject:—

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The Sonnet.

Nuns fret not at their convents' narrow room;
And hermits are contented with their cells,
And students with their pensive citadels;
Maids at the wheel, the weaver at his loom,
Sit blithe and happy; bees that soar for bloom,
High as the highest peak of Furness Fells,
Will murmur by the hour in foxglove bells:
In truth, the prison unto which we doom
Ourselves no prison is; and hence to me,
In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be bound
Within the sonnet's scanty plot of ground;
Pleased if some souls (for such there needs must be)
Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,
Should find brief solace there, as I have found.

(7) **The Epigram.**—This is a short poem on some single thought; brevity and wit being its essentials, the point generally coming at the end.

On One who made long Epitaphs.

Friend, for your epitaphs I'm grieved;
Where still so much is said,
One-half will never be believed,
The other never read.

Pope.

On an M.P. who wrote a severe Critique on the Pleasures of Memory.

They say he has no heart, but I deny it;
He has a heart—and gets his speeches by it.

Rogers.

The Epitaph, like the epigram, is short and pointed, and it may be witty or not. It is written to eulogize, or satirize some defunct individual; and, as its name implies, is supposed to be inscribed on his tomb.

On Sir Isaac Newton.

Nature, and Nature's laws lay hid in night:
God said, 'Let Newton be!' and all was light.

Pope.

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METRE.

Rhythm, as has been before defined, is the undulation of sound produced by the alternation of accented and unaccented syllables, which mainly distinguishes poetry from prose.

Metre is the measure of rhythm, answering to the *beat* in music. It requires that there shall be a certain number of syllables in a verse or line, and that these syllables shall be accented in a particular way.

A Foot is the unit of metre, answering to a *bar* in music. It consists of a group of either two or three syllables, one of which is accented.

A Verse is a cycle of feet constituting one line of poetry.

A Couplet is two consecutive lines in rhyme.

A Triplet is three consecutive lines rhyming together.

A Stanza is a group of verses, varying in number according to the poet's fancy, and forming a regular division of a poem.

Scanning is the process of dividing a verse into its component feet.

Cæsura (or cutting) is the pause which takes place in reading a verse of poetry.

These pauses generally, but not always, correspond to pauses in the sense. The most usual places for cæsural pauses to occur are at the end of the second or the third foot; but, especially in iambic measure, they may be introduced at almost any part of the verse, and, according to their position, the character of the melody is varied:[1] e.g.

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[1] The cæsural pause is sometimes considered to occupy the place of an omitted unaccented syllable. The laws which regulate the cæsura in classical poetry have no bearing whatever upon English verse.

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There's a being bright, || whose beams
Light my days || and gild my dreams, ||
Till my life || all sunshine seems || —
'Tis the Ladye of Lee.

Father Prout.

He heard it, || but he heeded not; || his eyes
Were with his heart, || and that was far away: ||
He recked not of the life he lost || nor prize, ||
But where his rude hut || by the Danube lay;
There || were his young barbarians all at play, ||
There || was their Dacian mother || —he, their sire,
Butchered || to make a Roman holiday. ||
All this rushed with his blood. || Shall he expire
And unavenged? || Arise, || ye Goths, and glut your ire!

Byron.

Now morn || her rosy steps in the Eastern clime
Advancing || sowed the earth with orient pearl, ||
When Adam waked, || so customed, || for his sleep
Was aery light || from pure digestion bred, ||
And temperate vapours bland.

Milton.

Alas! alas!
Why || all the souls that were, || were forfeit once; ||
And He || that might the vantage best have took ||
Found out the remedy. || How would you be,
If He, || which is the top of judgment, || should
But judge you || as you are? || O think on that, ||
And mercy then || will breathe within your lips ||
Like man new made.

Shakspere.

KINDS OF FEET.

A foot consists of either two or three syllables, whether of the same word or not.

A **dissyllabic** foot, when accented on the *second* syllable, is called an **iambus**; when on the first a **trochee.**

A **trisyllabic** foot, when accented on the first syllable, is called a **dactyl**; when on the second, an **amphibrach**; when on the third, an **anapest**: e. g.

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Iambus	—	disdaín.
Trochee	—	prétty.
Dactyl	—	númerous.
Amphibrach	—	depárted.
Anapest	—	dominéer.

Besides these there occur, occasionally, dissyllabic feet, in which both syllables are accented, or both unaccented; e. g.

Spondee	—	keén wínd.
Pyrrhic	—	at a (time).

These names of the various kinds of feet are borrowed from the classical languages, in which, it must be borne in mind, they are distinguished by quantity and not by accent (see page 2). If this is clearly kept in view we may safely employ the usual signs for marking accented and unaccented syllables (i. e. – ⏑) without fear of their being connected with quantity.

Most of our English verse is in *Iambic metre*, although the majority of English dissyllables are trochees, because our language contains a large number of unaccented monosyllables, which, on being prefixed to other words, cause it to run in iambics.

LAMBIC MEASURE.

(*a*) Of one and two feet (**Monometer** and **Dimeter**).

Ăh Bēn!
Sa͡y hōw, | ŏr whēn,
Shăll wē, | thў gūests,
Meet at those lyric feasts
Măde āt | thĕ Sūn?

Herrick.

If thou | hadst not
Been stern | to me,
But left | me free;
I had | forgot
Myself | and thee.

Jonson.

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I feel | like one,
Who treads | alone
Some banquet-hall deserted,
Whose lights | are fled,
Whose gar|lands dead,
And all but he departed.

Moore.

With rav|ished ears,
The mon|arch hears,
Assumes | the god,
Affects | to nod,
And seems to shake the spheres.

Dryden.

Short verses of this kind are only used in combination with longer ones to diversify the melody.

(*b*) Of three feet **(trimeter)**—

The night's | perpet|ual gloom,
The si|lence of | the tomb,

Aloft | in aw|ful state,
The god | like he|ro sate,
On his | imper|ial throne.

Dryden.

The mon|arch saw | and shook,
And bade | no more | rejoice;
All blood|less wax'd | his look,
And trem|ulous | his voice.

Byron.

(*c*) Of four feet **(tetrameter)**—

O La|dy, twine | no wreath | for me,
Or twine | it of | the cy|press tree.

Scott.

By fai|ry hands | their knell | is rung,
By forms | unseen | their dirge | is sung;
There Hon|our comes, | a pil|grim gray,
To bless | the turf | that wraps | their clay;
And Free|dom shall | a while | repair
To dwell | a weep|ing her|mit there.

Collins.

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And may | at last | my wea|ry age
Find out | the peace|ful her|mitage.

Milton

This octosyllabic iambic measure is largely employed by Butler, Gay, Scott, and others in couplets; sometimes short poems occur in it in triplets. Alternating iambics of four and three feet constitute *ballad metre*, and the *common metre* of our Psalms: e. g.

They fol|lowed from | the snow|y bank
Those foot|marks one | by one,
Into | the mid|dle of | the plank—
And fur|ther there | was none!

Wordsworth.

I am | the Ri|der of | the wind,
The Stir|rer of | the storm;
The hur|ricane | I left | behind
Is yet | with light|ning warm.

Byron.

While shep|herds watched | their flocks | by night,
All seat|ed on | the ground,
The an|gel of | the Lord | came down,
And glo|ry shone | around.

(*d*) Of five feet (**Pentameter**)—

A vile | conceit | in pom|pous words | expressed,
Is like | a clown | in re|gal pur|ple dressed.

Pope.

While words | of learn|ed length | and thun|dering sound,
Amazed | the gaz|ing rus|tics ranged | around.

Goldsmith.

O Thou, | that, with | surpass|ing glo|ry crowned,
Look'st from | thy sole | domin|ion like | the God
Of this | new world; | at whose | sight all | the stars
Hide their | dimin|ished heads; | to Thee | I call.

Milton.

How like | a win|ter hath | my ab|sence been
From thee, | the pleas|ure of | the flee|ting year!
What freez|ings have | I felt, | what dark | days seen,
What old | Decem|ber's bare|ness ev'|rywhere!

Shakspere.

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Iambic pentameter, in rhyme, is generally known as the **Heroic measure** of English poetry. Chaucer uses it for his *Canterbury Tales*; Dryden, Pope, Goldsmith, Keats, Southey, &c. also most frequently employ it. Without rhyme it is called **Blank Verse**. (See page 20.)

Four heroics, with alternate rhymes, constitute the **Elegiac Stanza**: e. g.

Full man|y̆ a gem | of pu|rest ray | serene
The dark | unfath|omed caves | of o|cean bear:
Full man|y̆ a flower | is born | to blush | unseen,
And waste | its sweet|ness on | the des|ert air.

Gray.

(*e*) Of six feet (**Hexameter**)—

A needless Alexandrine ends the song,
That, like | a wound|ed snake, | drags its | slow length | along.

Pope.

When Spring | unlocks | the flowers | to paint | the laugh|ing soi
When Sum|mer's balm|y showers | refresh | the mow|er's toil.

Heber.

The dew | was fall|ing fast, | the stars | began | to blink;
I heard | a voice, | it said, | 'Drink, pret|ty creat|ure, drink!'
And look|ing o'er | the hedge, | before | me, I | espied
A snow-|white mount|ain lamb, | with ă maid|en at | its side.

Wordsworth.

An hun|dred val|iant men | had this | brave Rob|in Hood,
Still read|y at | his call, | that bow|men were | right good,
All clad | in Lin|coln green, | with caps | of red | and blue,
His fel|low's wind|ed horn, | not one | of them | but knew.

Drayton.

This measure, called *Alexandrine*, because many old French poems in praise of Alexander were written in it, is but seldom used in English, except when interspersed here and there with heroic couplets, and especially as the concluding verse of the *Spenserian stanza*.

(*f*) Of seven feet (**Heptameter**)—

And none | will grieve | when I | go forth, | or smile | when I | return,
Or watch | beside | the old | man's bed, | or weep | upon | his urn.

Macaulay.

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No mar|vel that | the la|dy wept, | it was | the land | of France,
The cho|sen home | of chiv|alry, | the gar|den of | romance!

Bell.

I thought | to pass | away | before, | and yet | alive | I am;
And in | the fields | all round | I hear | the bleat|ing of | the lamb.
How sad|ly, I | remem|ber, rose | the morn|ing of | the year!
To die | before | the snow|drop came, | and now | the vio|let's here.

Tennyson.

The war|rior bowed | his crest|ed head, | and tamed | his heart | of fire,
And sued | the haugh|ty king | to free | his long-|impris|oned sire:
'I bring | thee here | my fort|ress keys, | I bring | my cap|tive train;
I pledge | my faith, | my liege, | my lord | —oh! break | my fa|ther's chain.'

Hemans.

Chapman's translation of the Iliad, and many of Macaulay's Lays, &c. are written in this measure. It is customary to divide many of these verses into two lines of four and three feet, making it into **ballad** or **Service metre**: e. g.

God moves | in a | myster|ious way
His won|ders to | perform;
He plants | his foot|steps in | the deep,
And rides | upon | the storm.

Cowper.

Sometimes, but rarely, **octameter** iambics are met with, but these are now generally printed as two tetrameter lines, constituting the *Long metre* of our psalms: e. g.

When in | the night | I sleep|less lie,
My soul | with heaven | ly thoughts | supply:
Let no | ill-dreams | disturb | my rest,
No powers | of dark|ness me | molest.

Ken.

All the examples given above are perfect, and *symmetrical*, i. e. the number of syllables in each verse is a multiple of the number of accents. Poets, however, are not bound to a slavish adherence to metrical laws. Sometimes of necessity, and sometimes intentionally, in order to vary the character of the melody, other kinds of feet are introduced, and an additional syllable is added to the line, these extra syllables forming double rhymes. Verses of the

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latter kind are called *hypermetrical*. Examples of such licenses will be seen in the following extracts :—

Still car|*ing*,
Despair|*ing*,
Must be | my bit|ter doom ;
My woes | *here*
Shall close | *ne'er*,
But with | the clos|ing tomb.

Burns.

I steal | by lawns | and grass|y plots,
I glide | by haz|el cov|*ers*,
I move | the sweet | forget- | me-nots
That grow | for hap|py lov|*ers*.

Tennyson.

With deep | affec|*tion*,
And re|collec|*tion*,
I of|ten think | *of*
Those Shan|don bells,
Whose sound | so wild | *would*
In my days | of child|*hood*
Fling round | my cra|*dle*
Their mag|ic spells.

Father Prout (Francis Mahoney).

Day af|ter day, | day af|ter day
We stuck, | nor breath | nor mo|*tion* ;
As i|dle as | a paint|ed ship
Upon | a paint | ed o | *cean*.

Coleridge.

Be good, | sweet maid, | and let | who will | be clev|*er* ;
Do no|ble things, | not dream | them all | day long :
And so | make life, | death, and | that vast | for ev|*er*
One grand, | sweet song.

Kingsley.

My life | is cold | and dark | and drear|*y* ;
It rains | and the wind | is nev|er wear|*y* ;
My thoughts | still cling | to the mould|ering Past,
And the hopes | of youth | fall thick | in the blast,
And the days | are dark | and drear|*y*.

Longfellow.

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BLANK VERSE.

So much of our poetry is in Blank Verse, and so many are the variations from strict metrical laws allowable in it, that it will be well to make a few remarks about it here apart from other iambic measures. Blank verse consists of five iambic feet without rhyme. It was first employed in English by the Earl of Surrey, at the time of Henry VIII., in a translation he made of the 4th book of the Æneid; but the first great original poem written in it was the 'Paradise Lost.' It is perhaps the easiest,[1] the most natural of all English metres, and seems specially adapted to the genius of the language, as Hexameter verse[2] is to the classical ones. In it the poet is less trammelled by artificial restrictions, and has more licenses granted him than in any other kind of versification. All our dramatic, and most of our epic and descriptive, poetry is written in it. On all these grounds, therefore, it may safely be pronounced to be *the finest metre in English*, and, perhaps, in any other language. Although the measure of this verse is so simple, and, on first thought, would seem so likely to become wearisome in lengthy compositions, there is no other metre in the language that admits of such infinite variety. The character of the rhythm may change in almost every line. Each great master that has employed it to any extent has given to it a distinctive character, amounting almost to what might be regarded as a separate kind of verse, that might well bear his name. The full-mouthed melody of Milton, for example, is as different from

[1] Byron, and with him many others, held that octosyllabic iambic is the easiest measure in English; it must be remembered, however, that it is always in rhyme.

[2] Note that there is nothing in common between iambic hexameter and classical hexameter verse, except the number of feet.

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the homely sweetness and flexible grace of most that Shakspere has written, as can possibly be; and if we compare the verse of either of these with such a poem as the *Task* by Cowper, we should find another widely differing variety.

The *licenses* allowed in Blank verse, and especially in dramatic, may be summed up as follows:—

(1) A *trochee* may be substituted for an iambus in almost any part of the line, though seldom in the second or the fifth foot, but frequently in the first. Two trochees, however, are rarely found together.

(2) Two, and sometimes even three, unaccented syllables may occur in any part of a verse instead of the unaccented half of the foot: in other words, an *anapest* may be used for an iambus almost anywhere.

(3) A *spondee* may take the place of an iambus anywhere.

(4) At the end of the fifth foot, one or even two unaccented syllables may be added, but this does not make the verse an Alexandrine, as there is no sixth accent.

(5) Rarely, a verse of nine syllables occurs, such a line being called *catalectic*.

(6) We sometimes meet with a part of a verse perfect as far as it goes: this is called a *hemistich*.

About | them frisk|ing played

All beasts | of the earth, | since wild, | and of | all chase
In wood | or wild|erness, | forest, | or den;
Sporting | the li|on romped, | and in | his paw
Dandled | the kid; | bears, ti|gers, ounc|es, pards,
Gambolled | before | them; the | unwield|y el|ephant
To make | them sport | used all | his might, | and wreathed
His lithe | probos|cis.

Milton.

Farewell, | a long | farewell | to all | my great|ness
This is | the state | of man: | to-day | he puts forth

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The tend|er leaves | of hope, | to-mor|row blos|*soms*,
And bears | his blush|ing hon|ours thick | upon | *him*.
Shakspere.

I see | thee yet | in form | as pal|pable
As this | which now | I draw.
Thou mar|shal'st me | the way | that I | was go|*ing*.
Ibid.

Through man|y a dark | and drear|y vale
They passed, | and man|y a re|gion do|lorous,
O'er man|y a fro|zen, man|y a fi|ery Alp,
Rocks, caves, | lakes, fens, | bogs, dews, | and shades | of death.
Milton.

TROCHAIC MEASURE.[1]

(*a*) Of one and two feet (Monometer and Dimeter).

Cryĭng,
Sighĭng,
Whinĭng,
Pinĭng,
Is thĕ | lōvĕr's | pārt.

Rich the | treasure
Sweet the | pleasure
Sweet is pleasure after pain,
Dryden.

Hope is | banished,
Joys are | vanished,
Damon, my beloved, is gone!
Ibid.

(*b*) Of three feet (Trimeter).

Fill the | bumper | fair;
Every | drop we | sprinkle
On the | brow of | care,
Smooths a|way a | wrinkle.
Moore.

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[1] As the difference between *symmetrical* and *hypermetrical* metres has been clearly pointed out in iambics, there is no necessity to keep the two apart any longer.

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Crabbed | age and | youth
Cannot | live to|gether;
Youth is | full of | pleasance,
Age is | full of | care;
Youth like | summer | morn,
Age like | winter | weather;
Youth like | summer | brave,
Age like | winter | bare.

Shakspere.

It will be seen in these, as well as in the specimens that follow, that the last foot is frequently shorn of its unaccented syllable.

(*c*) Of four feet **(Tetrameter).**

Hearken | to their | steady | stamp!
Mars is | in their | every | tramp!
Not a | step is | out of | tune,
As the | tides o|bey the | moon.

Byron.

Thus it | is our | daughters | leave us,
Those we | love and | those who | love us!
Just when | they have | learned to | help us,
When we are | old and | lean up|on them,
Comes a | youth with | flaunting | feathers,
With his | flute of | reeds, a | stranger
Wanders | piping | through the | village,
Beckons | to the | fairest | maiden,
And she | follows | where he | leads her,
Leaving | all things | for the | stranger!

Longfellow.

Though in | distant | lands we | sigh,
Parched be|neath a | hostile | sky;
Though the | deep be|tween us | rolls,
Friendship | shall u|nite our | souls:
Still in | fancy's | rich do|main
Oft shall | we thus | meet a|gain.

Why so | pale and | wan, fond | lover?
Prythee, | why so | pale?
Will, if | looking | well can't | move her,
Looking | ill pre|vail?
Prythee, | why so | pale?

Suckling.

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Lay the | proud u|surpers | low!
Tyrants | fall in | every | foe!
Liber|ty's in | every | blow!
Forward! | let us | do, or | die!

Burns.

Praise the | Lord! ye | heavens a|dore Him!
Praise Him, | angels, | in the | height!
Sun and | moon re|joice be|fore Him!
Praise Him, | all ye | stars and | light!

The last stanza is in the 8,7's of our hymns.

(*d*) Of five feet **(Pentameter).**

Virtue's | brightening | ray shall | live for | ever.

Then me|thought I | heard a | hollow | sound,
Gathering | up from | all the | lower | ground.
Narrowing | in to | where they | sat as|sembled,
Low vol|uptuous | music | winding | trembled.

Tennyson.

(*e*) Of six feet **(Hexameter).**

Holy, | Holy, | Holy! | though the | darkness | hide Thee,
Though the | eye of | sinful | man Thy | glory | may not | see,
Only | Thou art | Holy: | there is | none be|side Thee.

Heber.

On a | mountain, | stretched be|neath a | hoary | willow,
Lay a | shepherd | swain, and | viewed the | roaring | billow.

(*f*) Of seven and eight feet **(Hept- and Octameter).**

Then we | bounded | from our | covert. | Judge how | looked the | Saxons | then,
When they | saw the | rugged | mountain | start to | life with | armed | men!
Like a | tempest | down the | ridges | swept the | hurri|cane of | steel;
Rose the | slogan | of Mac|donald | —flashed the | broadsword | of Loch | iel.

Aytoun.

Cursed | be the | social | wants that | sin a|gainst the | strength of | youth!
Cursed | be the | social | lies that | warp us | from the | living | truth!
Cursed | be the | sickly | forms that | err from | honest | Nature's | rule!
Cursed | be the | gold that | gilds the | straitened | forehead | of the | fool!

Tennyson.

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Ah! dis|tinctly | I re|member, | it was | in the | bleak De|cember,
And each | separate | dying | ember | wrought its | ghost up|on the | floor.
Eager|ly I | wished the | morrow; | vainly | I had | sought to | borrow
From my | books sur|cease of | sorrow— | sorrow | for the | lost Le|nore—
For the | rare and | radiant | maiden | whom the | angels | name Le|nore—
Nameless | here for | ever|more.

Edgar Allan Poe.

It will have been noticed from the specimens given above, that *licenses* in this measure are not so varied, nor so frequently used, as in iambic metre. The chief is that an iambus is often used for a trochee in any part of the line, especially in the last foot. If the last foot is a trochee, it will form a double rhyme; but very often an additional accented syllable is added, forming a single rhyme. Note, in the last specimen, rhymes occurring in the middle of the line.

ANAPESTIC MEASURE.

Of trissyllabic verse, anapestic and dactylic are the most common; indeed, what is generally considered as amphibrach may be regarded as belonging to one of the other two measures, as will be fully shown hereafter. The rhythmical ring of trissyllabic poetry renders it peculiarly adapted both to lively and mournful subjects; but in narrative and description it is seldom employed. Poems of any length are never written in it; partly because the melody, which is its prominent feature, would become monotonous, and partly because its construction is more artificial, and imposes more verbal restrictions on the poet than he ought to have to contend with in great works. The licenses allowed in this kind of verse are many and varied; the introduction of other feet and additional syllables being almost the rule instead of the exception. In anapestic verse the rhyme is single when the metre is symmetrical, double when hypermetrical.

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Hĕ ĭs gōne | ŏn thĕ mōunt | ăin,
Hĕ ĭs lōst | tŏ thĕ fōr|ĕst,
Lĭke ă sūm|mĕr-drĭed fōunt|ăin,
Whĕn ŏur nēed | wăs thĕ sōr|ĕst.
Thĕ fōunt | rĕ-ăppēar|ĭng,
Frŏm thĕ rain|drŏps shăll bōr|rŏw;
Bŭt tŏ ūs | cŏmes nŏ chēer|ĭng,
Tŏ Dūn|căn nŏ mōr|rŏw!

Scott.

I arise | from dreams of Thee
In the first | sweet sleep of night,
When the winds | are breathing low,
And the stars | are shining bright:
I arise | from dreams of Thee,
And a spir|it in my feet
Has led | me—who knows how?—
To thy cham|ber-window, Sweet!

Shelley.

In this beautiful song, the melody of which is perfect, my own impression is, that the second foot in each verse consists of *three* unaccented and an accented syllable. Of course it may be regarded as two iambics.

'Tis the last | rose of sum|mer
Left bloom|ing alone,
All her love|ly compan|ions
Are fad|ed and gone.

Moore.

I am out | of human|ity's reach,
I must fin|ish my jour|ney alone,
Never hear | the sweet mu|sic of speech;
I start | at the sound | of my own.

Cowper.

In the down | hill of life, | when I find | I'm declin|ing,
May my lot | no less for|tunate be
Than a snug | elbow-chair | can afford | for reclin|ing,
And a cot | that o'erlooks | the wide sea.

Collins.

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She is far | from the land | where her young | hero sleeps,
And lov|ers around | her are sigh|ing;
But cold|ly she turns | from their gaze, | and weeps,
For her heart | in his grave | is ly|ing.

Moore.

Note here that there is only one *perfect* verse in the four, and that this is the most perfect stanza of the poem.

False wiz|ard, avaunt! | I have mar|shalled my clan;
Their swords | are a thou|sand, their bo|soms are one!
They are true | to the last | of their blood | and their breath,
And like reap|ers descend | to the har|vest of death.

Campbell.

There the war|rior lay stretched | in the midst | of his pride,
And the bride|groom fell dead | by the corpse | of his bride;
Unswept | was the lyre, | and forsa|ken the lute,
And the lips | of the min|strel for ev|er were mute.

(*Pompeii*) *Anon.*

I come! | I come! | ye have called | me long,
I come | o'er the mount|ains with light | and song;
Ye may trace | my step | o'er the wak|'ning earth,
By the winds | which tell | of the vio|lets' birth,
By the prim|rose stars | in the shad|owy grass,
By the green | leaves op|ening as | I pass.

Hemans.

Not a drum | was heard, | not a fun|eral note,
As his corse | to the ramp|art we hur|ried;
Not a sol|dier discharg|èd his fare|well shot
O'er the grave | where our he|ro we bur|ied.

Wolfe.

O, young | Lochinvar | is come out | of the west,
Through all | the wide Bor|der his steed | was the best,
And save | his good broad|sword he weap|on had none,
For he rode | all unarmed, | and he rode | all alone!
So faith|ful in love, | and so daunt|less in war,
There nev|er was knight | like the young | Lochinvar!

Scott.

And the rose | like a nymph | to the bath | addrest,
Which unveil|èd the depth | of her glow|ing breast,
Till, fold | after fold, | to the faint|ing air
The soul | of her beau|ty and love | lay bare.

Shelley.

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DACTYLIC MEASURE.

Shādŏws ŏf | bēautў!
Shādŏws ŏf | pōwer!
Rīse tŏ yŏur | dūtў—
This is the | hōur!

Byron.

Cannon to | right of them,
Cannon to | left of them,
Cannon in | front of them,
Volleyed and | thundered;
Stormed at with | shot and shell,
Boldly they | rode and well;
Into the | jaws of death,
Into the | mouth of hell,
Rode the six | hundred.

Tennyson.

Make no deep | scrutiny
Into her | mutiny
Rash and un | dutiful:
Past all dis | honour,
Death has left | on her
Only the | beautiful.

Hood.

Tell me, thou | bonny bird,
When shall I | marry me?
—When six braw | gentlemen
Kirkward shall | carry ye.

Scott.

Where shall the | lover rest
Whom the fates | sever
From his true | maiden's breast
Parted for | ever?
Where through groves | deep and high
Sounds the far | billow,
Where early | violets die
Under the | willow.

Ibid.

Bird of the | wilderness,
Blithesome and | cumberless,
Light be thy | matin o'er | moorland and | lea;
Emblem of | happiness,
Blest is thy | dwelling place;
O! to a | bide in the | desert with | thee!

Hogg.

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Warriors and | Chiefs! should the | shaft or the | sword
Pierce me in | leading the | hosts of the | Lord,
Heed not a | corse, though | a king's, in your | path:
Bury your | steel in the | bosoms of | Gath.

Byron.

Onward she | glides, amid | ripple and | spray
Over the | waters a | way and a | way!
Bright as the | visions of | youth ere they | part,
Passing a | way, like a | dream of the | heart!

Hervey.

Brightest and | best of the | sons of the | morning,
Dawn on our | darkness, and | lend us thine | aid;
Star of the | East, the hor | izon a | dorning,
Guide where our | Infant Re | deemer is | laid.

Heber.

AMPHIBRACH MEASURE.

This is seldom employed as a regular metre in our poetry, and, as has been before remarked, it may easily be read as anapests or dactyls. In fact, it is often difficult to decide in many of our trissyllabic poems whether the measure is of one kind or the other; licenses are so common that, frequently, the rhythm of each verse is different. The *general character* of the melody will alone enable us to determine the measure of the piece. In the following extracts the general character of the metre is amphibrach, though, by regarding the first foot as an iambus, it would become anapestic, while by beginning with a single syllable it would be dactylic.

Thĕ Bōurbŏn! | thĕ Bōurbŏn!
Săns cōuntrў | ŏr hōme,
Wĕ'll fŏllŏw | thĕ Bōurbŏn
Tŏ plūndĕr | ŏld Rōme.

Byron.

The dew of | the morning
Sunk chill on | my brow;
It felt like | the warning
Of what I | feel now.

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Thy vows are | all broken,
And light is | thy fame;
I hear thy | name spoken,
And share in | its shame.

Ibid.

There came to | the beach a | poor exile | of Erin;
The dew on | his thin robe | was heavy | and chill;
For his count | ry he sighed, | when at twi | light repair | ing,
To wander | alone by | the wind-beat | en hill.

Campbell.

The third verse of this last stanza is purely anapestic, and indeed the whole poem reads best in that measure.

Away ye | gay landscapes, | ye gardens | of roses!
In you let | the minions | of luxu | ry rove;
Restore me | the rocks where | the snow-flake | reposes,
For still they | are sacred | to freedom | and love.

Byron.

Macgregor, | Macgregor, | remember | our foemen!
The morn ri | ses broad from | the brow of | Ben Lomond,
The clans are | impatient | and chide thy | delay;
Arise! let | us bound to | Glen-Lyon | away.

Hogg.

The following are examples in which the rhythm is so mixed that it is difficult to say which kind they belong to:—

Mont Blanc is | the monarch | of mountains,
They crown'd | him long | ago
On a throne | of rocks, | in a robe | of clouds,
With a di | adem | of snow.
Around | his waist | are for | ests braced,
The av' | lanche in | his hand;
But ere | it fall, | that thun | dering ball
Must pause | for my | command.

Byron.

Now silent | ly poised | ...e war of | the main,
Like the Spir | it of Cha... | ...ity brood | ing o'er pain;
Now gliding | with pinion | all silent | ly furled,
Like an an | gel descend | ing to com | fort the world!

Gerald Griffin.

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I was a | child, and | she was a | child,
In this king | dom by | the sea;
But we loved | with a love | that was more | than love,
I and my | Annabel | Lee:
With a love | that the wing | ed ser | aphs of heaven
Coveted | her and | me.

Edgar Allan Poe.

CLASSIC METRES.

The various metres that have been already classified and illustrated may be styled *English or regular metres*, in contradistinction to *Classic or irregular ones*. No great English poem has ever been written, in English, in any other measure than one of those before mentioned. Various attempts, however, have been made by scholars in recent times to introduce certain of the classical metres into our language; but it is pretty generally admitted that these experiments are, for the most part, failures. They are all made upon the principle of substituting *quantity* for *accent*, whereas English verse must have accentual rhythm, or be no verse at all. A spondaic line of English words, for instance, would be totally destitute of rhythm, if it were read *in time*; but one could hardly help reading it without laying stress on the alternate syllables, thus at once destroying the quantity and substituting accent in its place. It may safely be said that any of those experiments which are regarded by competent judges as successful, are only so in proportion as the long syllables in them are identical with the accented ones, and that the less often these coincidences occur, the less of the characteristics of English verse the pieces have. Hexameter is the only measure in which any success can be said to have been attained.

The Classic metres that have thus been experimented on are, Hexameter, Pentameter, Sapphic, and Alcaic; the formulæ of which are as follow:—

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Hexameters – ⏑⏑ | – ⏑⏑ | – ⏑⏑ | – ⏑⏑ | – ⏑⏑ | – ⏓

Pentameters – ⏑⏑ | ⏑⏑ | – ‖ – ⏑⏑ | – ⏑⏑ | ⏓

Sapphics[1] – ⏑⏓ | – – | – ⏑⏑ | – ⏑ | – ⏑ |

Three lines of these followed by

– ⏑⏑ | – –

Alcaics ⏓ – | ⏑ – | – | – ⏑⏑ | .

Two lines of these followed by

– – | ⏑ – | – – | ⏑ – | ⏓ .

– ⏑⏑ | – ⏑⏑ | – ⏑ | – ⏑

Longfellow has written his *Evangeline* and the *Courtship of Miles Standish* in hexameters. Tennyson, Dr. Arnold, Dr. Whewell, and other scholars of eminence, have also used it both in original poems and translations. Pentameters are used along with hexameters to form the *Elegiac* verse of the ancients. Dr. Whewell has translated some of Schiller's minor poems into it.

Dr. Watts, Cowper, Southey, and Canning (the last in parody both of the metre and subject-matter of much of Southey's earliest efforts) have attempted English sapphics.

The present Poet Laureate has recently written some English alcaics.

HEXAMETERS.

Fair was she | to be | hold, that | maiden of | seventeen | summers,
Black were her | eyes as the | berry that | grows on the | thorn by the | wayside,
Black, yet how | softly they | gleamed be | neath the brown | shade of her | tresses!
Sweet was her | breath as the | breath of | kine that | feed in the | meadows.

Evangeline.

[1] The dactyl and trochee in the first and the third foot respectively would be inadmissible in classic poetry. The annexed specimens of sapphics are scanned in such a manner as to give them every chance of being considered rhythmical.

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Soon were | heard on | board the | shouts and | songs of the | sailors,
Heaving the | windlass | round, and | hoisting the | ponderous | anchor.
Then the | yards were | braced, and | all sails | set to the | west-wind,
Blowing | steady and | strong; and the | May Flower | sailed from the | harbour.

Courtship of Miles Standish.

HEXAMETERS AND PENTAMETERS.

Wouldst thou | know thy|self? Ob|serve what thy | neighbours are | doing,
Wouldst thou thy | neighbours | know? || Look through the | depths of thy | heart.

Dr. Whewell.

Come all ye | weary and | worn, ye | heavily | laden and | sighing—
Wanderers | mournfully | plodding a | long through the | vale of des|pondence—
Come ye, Oh, | come ye to | Christ— || Saviour, | Comforter, | King;
Cast all your | burdens on | Him; || He will en|shroud you with | peace,
Cherish your | souls with His | love, || Hover a|round you in | sleep.

SAPPHICS.

Hatred and | vengeance, | my e|ternal | portion,
Scarce can en|dure de|lay for | exe|cution,—
Wait with im|patient | readi|ness to | seize my
Soul in a | moment.
Man disa|vows and | Dei|ty dis|owns me;
Hell might af|ford my | miser|ies a | shelter,
Therefore, hell | keeps her | ever | hungry | mouths all
Bolted a|gainst me.

Cowper.

Cold was the | night wind, | drifting | fast the | snow fell,
Wide were the | downs and | shelter|less and | naked,
When a poor | wanderer | struggled | on her | journey,
Weary and | waysore.

Southey,

Needy | knife-grind|er! whither | are you | going?
Rough is | the road, | your wheel is | out of | order;
Bleak blows the | blast—your | hat has | got a | hole in't,
So have your | breeches.

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* * * * * *
I give thee | sixpence! | I will | see thee | hanged first—
Wretch whom no | sense of | wrongs can | rouse to | vengeance—
Sordid, un | feeling, | repro|bate, de|graded,
Spiritless | outcast!

Canning.

ALCAICS.

O might|y mouth'd | in|ventor of | harmonies,
O skill'd | to sing | of | Time or E|ternity,
God gift|ed or|gan-voice | of Eng|land,
Milton, a | name to re|sound for | ages;
Whose Ti|tan an|gels, | Gabriel, | Abdiel,
Starr'd from | Jeho|vah's | gorgëous | armouries,
Tower as | the deep- | domed em|pyrë | an
Rings to the | roar of an | angel | onset.

Tennyson.

A sufficient number of examples has been quoted, it is hoped, to show the thoroughly *un-English* character of these metres, hexameter alone excepted.

VARIETIES OF STANZAS.

A *stanza* has been already defined to be a group of verses, varying in number according to the poet's fancy, and forming a regular division of a poem. It would be next to impossible to enumerate all the variations of such groupings that poets have adopted, but the chief of them which require to be noted are as follow:—

The Spenserian Stanza.—This consists of eight heroics and an Alexandrine. Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*, Beattie's *Minstrel*, Burns's *Cotter's Saturday Night*, and Byron's *Childe Harold*, are written in it.

I care not, Fortune, what you me deny:
You cannot rob me of free Nature's grace;
You cannot shut the windows of the sky,
Through which Aurora shows her brightening face;
You cannot bar my constant feet to trace

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The woods and lawns, by living stream, at eve:
Let health my nerves and finer fibres brace,
And I their toys to the great children leave:
Of fancy, reason, virtue, nought can me bereave.

Castle of Indolence.

Ottava Rima.—This consists of eight heroics, the first six rhyming alternately, the last two in succession. Many of the great poems of Italy, Spain, and Portugal are arranged in this stanza: Byron's translation of *Morgante Maggiore* and his *Don Juan* are the best English examples of it.

Then rose from sea to sky the wild farewell—
Then shrieked the timid, and stood still the brave—
Then some leaped overboard with dreadful yell,
As eager to anticipate their grave;
And the sea yawned round her like a hell,
And down she sucked with her the whirling wave,
Like one who grapples with his enemy,
And strives to strangle him before he die.

Don Juan.

Terza Rima.—This is made up of heroics with three rhymes at intervals. Byron's *Prophecy of Dante* is the best English specimen of it:—

Many are poets who have never penned
Their inspiration, and perchance the best:
They felt, and loved, and died, but would not lend
Their thoughts to meaner beings; they compressed
The god within them, and rejoined the stars
Unlaurelled upon earth, but far more blest
Than those who are degraded by the jars
Of passion, and their frailties linked to fame,
Conquerors of high renown, but full of scars.
Many are poets, but without the name;
For what is poesy but to create
From overfeeling good or ill; and aim
At an external life beyond our fate,
And be the new Prometheus of new men,
Bestowing fire from heaven, and then, too late
Finding the pleasure given repaid with pain.

Prophecy of Dante.

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Rhyme Royal.—Seven heroics, the first five rhyming at intervals, the last two in succession. This stanza was often used by our early writers, Chaucer, Spenser, &c., but has found few imitators in more modern poets:—

So every spirit, as it is most pure,
And hath in it the more of heavenly light,
So it the fairer body doth procure
To habit in, and it more fairly dight
With cheerful grace and amiable sight;
For of the soul the body form doth take;
For soul is form, and doth the body make.

Spenser.

The **Elegiac Stanza**, consisting of four heroics rhyming alternately, the **Ballad** or **Service Stanza**, of four and three iambics, have already been noticed. A slight variation of the latter goes by the name of **Gay's Stanza**:—

All melancholy lying,
Thus wailed she for her dear;
Repaid each blast with sighing,
Each billow with a tear.
When o'er the white wave stooping
His floating corpse she spied,
Then, like a lily drooping,
She bowed her head and died.

Gay.

No other arrangements of verses have, as yet, received definite names. A few more examples are added to show the infinite variety that can be made of rhyme and metre:—

Fair pledges of a fruitful tree,
Why do you fall so fast?
Your date is not so past,
But you may stay yet here awhile
To blush and gently smile,
Then go at last.

Herrick.

She wept with pity and delight,
She blushed with love and virgin shame;
And like the murmur of a dream
I heard her breathe my name.

Coleridge.

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So serious should my youth appear among
The thoughtless throng,
So would I seem amid the young and gay
More grave than they,
That in my age as cheerful I might be
As the green winter of the holly tree.

Southey.

Wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower,
Thou 's met me in an evil hour;
For I maun crush amang the stoure
Thy slender stem;
To spare thee now is past my power,
Thou bonnie gem.

Burns.

Better than all measures
Of delight and sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Shelley.

I hold it truth with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.

Tennyson.

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FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE.

Figures of speech are intentional deviations from the ordinary form, or literal meaning of words, or the usual construction of sentences. They are largely used by poets, partly as a necessity, and partly as ornaments. There are three kinds of such licenses: (1) Figures of Orthography, (2) Figures of Syntax, (3) Figures of Rhetoric.

FIGURES OF ORTHOGRAPHY.

These are deviations from the ordinary spelling or pronunciation of words, their object being chiefly to shorten or lengthen a verse by a syllable.

(1) **Elision** is the omission of a letter or syllable either at the beginning, middle, or end of a word; e. g. 'neath, 'gan; lov'st, e'er; th', &c.

(2) **Prosthesis** is prefixing an expletive syllable to a word; as, yclad, beweep.

(3) **Paragoge** adds a syllable to the end of a word: this is rarely found but in old authors; as, withouten.

(4) **Synæresis** is the merging of two syllables into one; as, a͡lien, we'll.

(5) **Diæresis** is the separation of a diphthong into two sounds; as, aëronaut, zoölogy.

(6) **Tmesis** is the insertion of a word between the parts of a compound; as, to us ward: on which side soever.

(7) **An Archaism** is an old word or expression used for quaintness' sake, especially in imitations of old authors; e. g. wis, for know; e'en or eyne, for eyes; beeves, for bullocks.

FIGURES OF SYNTAX.

These are deviations from ordinary forms of expression, or the strict grammatical structure of sentences. Many of them would be *solecisms* in prose; but in poetry they are

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allowable, in order to meet the necessities of metre, or to add variety and elegance to the composition.

(1) **Ellipsis.**—This is omission of words which are necessary to complete the construction, though not to convey the meaning; as—

> Cold, cold, my girl?
>
> *Othello.*

> What, all my pretty chickens and their dam
> At one fell swoop?
>
> *Macbeth.*

Aposiopesis is the suppression of the consequence to be supplied by the hearer's mind; e. g.

> If she sustain him and his hundred knights
> When I have shown the unfitness—How now, Oswald?
>
> *Lear.*

> They fell together all as by consent;
> They dropped as by a thunder-stroke. What might,
> Worthy Sebastian? O, what might?—No more:
> And yet, methinks, I see it in thy face,
> What thou shouldst be: the occasion speaks thee; and
> My strong imagination sees a crown
> Dropping upon thy head.
>
> *Tempest.*

Asyndeton is the omission of conjunctions.

(2) **Pleonasm** is the introduction of superfluous words in order to strengthen the expression, or to keep the mind dwelling on the thought; e. g. The *sea-girt* isle; What a length of tail *behind*! There shall not be left one stone upon another *that shall not be thrown down.*

> Now all these things are over—Yes, all thy pretty ways—
> Thy needlework, thy prattle, thy snatches of old lays.
>
> *Macaulay.*

> The very head and front of my offending
> Hath this extent, no more.
>
> *Othello.*

> Nor to these idle orbs does day appear,
> Or sun, or moon, or stars, throughout the year,
> Or man, or woman.
>
> *Milton.*

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(3) **Enallage** is the use of one part of speech for another; as,

They fall successive, and successive rise.

Pope.

The idols are broke in the temple of Baal.

Byron.

(4) **Hyperbaton** is the transposition of words; e.g.

Idle after dinner, in his chair,
Sat a farmer, ruddy, fat, and fair.

Tennyson.

From morn
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
A summer's day.

Milton.

(5) **Anacoluthon** is the want of proper sequence in the construction of a compound sentence; e.g.

My name is Edgar, and thy father's son.

Lear.

Why I do trifle thus with his despair
Is done to cure it.

Ibid.

FIGURES OF RHETORIC.

These are deviations from the ordinary meaning or application of words, very frequently occurring in poetry, on account of the vigour and beauty they give to the language.

When we speak of a *staff* as a walking stick, or of a kettle *boiling* on the fire, we use those words in their literal meaning; but when we call bread the *staff* of life, or say of a man in a passion that he is *boiling* with rage, we use them figuratively. The earliest use of figurative language was, no doubt, merely in the application of the qualities of non-sensible objects to sensible ones, such as in speaking of a *warm* heart, a *hardened* sinner, a family *swollen* with pride; or in attributing actions to inanimate objects, as in the ocean *sleeping* after a storm, or of a mountain *lifting its hoary head* to the skies. This mode of speech, appealing so much to the imagination, giving life as it were to the material world around us, so full of energy and beauty, naturally became the favourite one with poets in all ages; and, at length, has become so extended in its application that, not only in literature, but in ordi-

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nary conversation we are constantly making use of it. It will be seen as we go further into the matter, that many of these figures are of so mixed a character that it is often difficult to class them with precision: metaphor and personification, metonomy and synecdoche, hendiadys and pleonasm are of this kind. The principal rhetorical figures are,—

(1) **Simile.**—This is a formal comparison instituted between two objects, which is generally introduced by *like*, *as*, or *so*; e. g.

Thine eye is like the star of eve,
And sweet thy voice as seraph's song.
Coleridge.

And as a bird each fond endearment tries,
To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds and led the way.
Goldsmith.

For pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed;
Or like a snow-flake on the river,
A moment white, then gone for ever.
Burns.

(2) **Metaphor** expresses the resemblance between objects without the sign *like* or *as*: it asserts that one thing *is* another in such and such respects. This is the most commonly used of all the figures of speech, as it is generally nothing more than the application of the attributes and actions of one thing directly to another. It often borders on personification.[1]

[1] In distinguishing metaphor from personification, it must be premised, that many words have acquired a metaphorical meaning by their being so commonly used to attribute the qualities of living beings to dead objects, and that therefore the figure lies more in the attribute than in the thing. Thus, in such expressions as the *howling* wind, the moonbeams *dancing* on the waters, we do not attribute personality to these objects, but merely assert the identity of the impressions which they, as well as living things, make upon our senses under similar circumstances. On the other hand, in personification we regard the object, for the time being, as a living reality; we invest it with a personality, assign it a gender, treat it as we should do a human being, i. e. as a proper noun, and give it a capital letter. (If the capital letter was always used, the difficulty would be at an end.)

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Hope is the lover's staff.
Two Gentlemen of Verona.

See how the golden groves around me smile.
Addison.

When he speaks,
The air, a chartered libertine, is still,
And the mute wonder lurketh in men's ears
To steal his sweet and honeyed sentences.
Henry V.

The melancholy hyacinth, that weeps
All night, and never lifts an eye all day.
Hurdis.

It was a tranquil spot, that seemed to smile
Even in the lap of horror; ivy clasped
The fissured stones with its entwining arms,
And did embower with leaves for ever green,
And berries dark, the smooth and even space
Of its inviolated floor; and here
The children of the autumnal whirlwind bore,
In wanton sport, those bright leaves whose decay,
Red, yellow, or ethereally pale,
Rival the pride of summer. 'Tis the haunt
Of every gentle wind whose breath can teach
The wilds to love tranquillity.
Shelley.

Mixed Metaphors sometimes occur even in our best authors: e.g.

To take *arms* against a *sea*[1] of troubles.
Hamlet.

I *bridle* in my struggling muse with pain,
That longs to *launch* into a bolder strain.
Addison.

(3) **Allegory** is a continuation of metaphors into a connected narrative; a series of fictitious events designed to represent and illustrate important realities. The parables of our Lord are the finest allegories that were ever uttered. The better kind of fables constitute another type of allegories. In our own language Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Addison's *Vision of Mirza* in

[1] To preserve the metaphor it has been proposed to read *siege* for *sea*.

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the 'Spectator,' and Dean Swift's *Tale of a Tub*, may be taken as the best specimens. Longfellow's *Excelsior* is a good example of a short one.[1]

Many a green isle needs must be
In the deep wide sea of misery,
Or the mariner, worn and wan,
Never thus could voyage on
Day and night, and night and day,
Drifting on his weary way,
With the solid darkness black
Closing round his vessel's track;
Whilst above, the sunless sky,
Big with clouds, hangs heavily,
And behind the tempest fleet
Hurries on with lightning feet,
Riving sail, and cord, and plank,
Till the ship has almost drank
Death from the o'er-brimming deep;
And sinks down, down, like that sleep
When the dreamer seems to be
Weltering through eternity;
And the dim low line before
Of a dark and distant shore
Still recedes, as ever still
Longing with divided will;
But no power to seek or shun,
He is ever drifted on
O'er the unreposing wave,
To the haven of the grave.

Shelley.

[1] Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel* may, perhaps, be included with these; for though it consists of a real narrative of Absalom's rebellion, it is intended to represent the Whig conspiracy of Shaftesbury.

Although the definition of allegory given above is sufficiently clear for practical purposes, some further distinctions should be pointed out between it and metaphor. In metaphor we always have the primary object in view with the secondary one attached to it; in allegory, the secondary is alone presented to us, the primary one being never alluded to. Metaphor has but one meaning, the figure being the mere dress of the reality; allegory has two distinct meanings, a figurative and a literal one, running side by side—the former alone before our eyes, the latter behind the curtain as it were.

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(4) **Hyperbole** is the figure by which we greatly exaggerate the attributes of things in order to produce a more vivid impression of the reality; e. g. They were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions.

A thousand knees
Ten thousand years together, naked, fasting,
Upon a barren mountain, and still winter,
In storm perpetual, could not move the gods
To look that way thou wert.

Winter's Tale.

Black it stood as Night,
Fierce as the Furies, terrible as Hell,
And shook a dreadful dart.

Milton.

The brightness of her cheek would shame the stars
As daylight doth a lamp; her eye in heaven
Would through the airy regions stream so bright,
That birds would sing, and think it were not night.

Romeo and Juliet.

Litotes is the opposite to hyperbole, much less being said than is meant; e. g. It is not little I have to say, i. e. a great deal; He is no fool, i. e. he is a very sensible fellow.

If he were a little valiant
'Twould be the better; and a little wise,
And, 'faith, a little honest.

Beaumont and Fletcher.

Hyperbolical language is generally the result of strong passion; and it need hardly be said that it is frequently overdone, and becomes mere raving. This applies, to some extent, to the passages given above—certainly to what follows:—

She poured forth tears at such a lavish rate,
That were the world on fire, they might have drowned
The wrath of Heaven, and quenched the mighty ruin.

King John.

(5) **Irony** is sneeringly to say the very opposite to what you intend to be understood; thus, in speaking of a rogue, to say, Yes, he is a very honest fellow.

This is some fellow,
Who, having been praised for bluntness, doth affect

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A saucy roughness; and constrains the garb
Quite from his nature: He cannot flatter, he!—
An honest mind and plain,—he must speak truth.
Lear.

The noble Brutus
Hath told you Cæsar was ambitious;
If it were so it was a grievous fault,
And grievously hath Cæsar answered it.
Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest
(For Brutus is an honourable man;
So are they all—all honourable men),
Come I to speak at Cæsar's funeral.
He was my friend, faithful and just to me:
But Brutus says he was ambitious,
And Brutus is an honourable man,
Et seq. *Julius Cæsar.*

Sarcasm and **Satire** naturally fall under this head: they are hardly figures of speech, and yet the figurative is so frequently blended with the literal in them that they may be considered as variations of irony:—

Health to immortal Jeffrey! once, in name
England could boast a Judge almost the same;
In soul so like, so merciful, yet just,
Some thought that Satan had resigned his trust,
And given his spirit to the world again,
To sentence letters, as he sentenced men.
Byron.

Thou wear a lion's hide! doff it for shame,
And hang a calf's skin on those recreant limbs.
King John.

He first sunk to the bottom—like his works;
But soon rose to the surface—like himself,—
For all corrupted things are buoyed, like corks,
By their own rottenness.
Byron.

(6) **Metonomy**, i.e. change of name. This is the figure by which we put cause for effect, or effect for cause, the sign for the thing signified, the container for the thing contained; e.g. He always carries Homer in his pocket, i.e. the works of Homer; They smote the city with the edge of the sword, i.e. the inhabitants; A land flowing with milk and honey.

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This ancient ruffian, sir, whose life I have spared
At suit of his grey beard——

Lear.

She by descent from royal lineage came
Of ancient kings and queens, that had of yore
Their sceptres stretcht from east to western shore,
And all the world in their subjection held.

Spenser.

Lend thy hand,
And pluck my magic garment from me—so;
Lie there my art.

Tempest.

Synecdoche: i.e. comprehension, is a species of metonomy, in which we put a part for the whole, or the whole for a part; e. g. The mill employs a hundred hands; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.

And as a hare whom hounds and horns pursue.

Goldsmith.

Thus while Elijah's burning wheels prepare,
From Carmel's height, to sweep the fields of air.

Campbell.

But yet I call you servile ministers,
That will with two pernicious daughters join
Your high engendered battles, 'gainst a head
So old and white as this.

Lear.

Another kind of metonomy is the use of an **abstract** for a corresponding **concrete** term; e.g.

Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason.

Hamlet.

Lo, at the couch where infant beauty sleeps
Her silent watch the mournful mother keeps.

Campbell.

Think'st thou that duty shall have dread to speak,
When power to flattery bows?

Lear.

Hendiadys may be regarded as another kind of metonomy, although it partakes of the nature of pleonasm as well. It is the use of two terms to express one thought; e.g.

She seemed the same
In person and appearance; but her house
Bespoke the sleepy hand of negligence.

Wordsworth.

By the sacred radiance of the sun.

Lear.

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(7) **Personification** is the figure of speech by which, in imagination, we ascribe life and personality to inanimate objects; e.g.

Grim-visaged War has smoothed his wrinkled front.
Richard III.

Sport, that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides.
Milton.

There Honour comes, a pilgrim gray,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay;
And Freedom shall awhile repair
To dwell a weeping hermit there.
Collins.

Crook-backed Age was tooth-shaken, and blear-eyed;
Went on three feet, and sometime crept on four;
With old lame bones, that rattled by his side;
His scalp all pil'd, and he with eld forelore,
His withered fist still knocking at Death's door;
Fumbling and drivelling, as he draws his breath;
For brief, the shape and messenger of Death.
(*Mirror of Magistrates*) *Sackville.*

First, in green apparel dancing,
The young Spring smiled with angel grace;
Rosy Summer, next advancing,
Rushed into her sire's embrace.
Campbell.

(8) **Antithesis** is the placing of things, or the attributes of things, in opposition, in order to heighten their effect by the contrast; e.g.

(*The Thames.*)
Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not dull;
Strong without rage; without o'erflowing, full.
Denham.

Let us be sacrificers, but not butchers, Caius;—
Let's kill him boldly, but not wrathfully;
Let's carve him as a dish fit for the gods,
Not hew him as a carcase fit for hounds.
Julius Cæsar.

Look here, upon this picture, and on this
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.

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See what a grace was seated on his brow:
Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself;
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
A station like the herald Mercury
New lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;
A combination, and a form, indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal
To give the world assurance of a man.
This *was* your husband,—look you now, what follows;
Here *is* your husband; like a mildewed ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten on this moor?

Hamlet.

Oxymoron is a kind of antithesis: it consists in joining epithets of quite a contrary signification to a word; e. g.

Parting is such sweet sorrow.

Shakspere.

No night, but rather darkness visible.

Milton.

Fairest Cordelia, thou art most rich, being poor;
Most choice, forsaken; and most loved, despised.

Shakspere.

Evil, be thou my good.

Milton.

It is a custom
More honoured in the breach than the observance.

Shakspere.

(9) **Climax** consists in the arrangement of thoughts step by step above each other, in order to produce a more vivid effect; e. g.

'It is highly criminal to bind a Roman citizen; to scourge him is enormous guilt; to kill him is almost parricide; but by what name shall I designate the crucifying of him?'—*Cicero against Verres.*

'Hath not a Jew hands? organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? Is he not fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same summer and winter,

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as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge?' — *Merchant of Venice.*

The trial scene in the *Merchant of Venice* furnishes one of the finest specimens of climax in the language.

Anti-climax is the very reverse of this—a descending instead of an ascending in thought. It is seldom employed except in burlesque:—

Millions and millions on these banks he views,
Thick, as the stars of night, or morning dews,
As thick as bees o'er vernal blossoms fly,
As thick as eggs at Ward in pillory.

Pope (*the Dunciad*).

(10) **Vision,** or **Imagery,** is the figure by which the speaker suddenly breaks off a narration, or a philosophising strain, and depicts a scene as though it were present to the senses:—

Dear lost companions of my tuneful art,
Dear as the light that visits these sad eyes,
Dear as the ruddy drops that warm my heart,
Ye died amidst your dying country's cries.—
No more I weep. They do not sleep.
On yonder cliffs, a grisly band,
I see them sit; they linger yet,
Avengers of their native land.

Gray.

The soul is set.—Now welcome, thou dread power!
Nameless yet thus omnipotent, which here
Walk'st in the shadow of the midnight hour
With a deep awe, yet all distinct from fear;
Thy haunts are ever where the dead walls rear
Their ivy mantles, &c.

* * * * * *

I see before me the gladiator lie:
He leans upon his hand; his manly brow
Consents to death, but conquers agony,
And his drooped head sinks gradually low, &c.

Byron.

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Apostrophe is the sudden turning off from the subject in hand to address some person or thing—the change from the third to the second person; e. g. 'Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory?'

What needs my Shakspere for his hallowed bones
The labour of an age in piled stones,
Or that his hallowed reliques should be hid
Under a star-ypointing pyramid?
Dear Son of Memory, great Heir of Fame,
What needst thou such weak witness of thy name?
Thou in our wonder and astonishment
Hast built thyself a livelong monument,
And so sepulchred, in such pomp dost lie,
That kings for such a tomb would wish to die.

Milton.

Interrogation is the breaking off from the affirmative, and the adopting of the interrogative form, in order to affirm, or deny more strongly; e. g. 'The Lord is not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent: —hath he said it, and shall he not do it? hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?'

Of all the licensed institutions of society slavery is the most detestable. What, grow men like cattle? Rear human families like herds of swine, and then scatter them to the four winds for gain? Among the imprecations uttered by man on man, is there one more fearful, more ominous, than the sighing of a mother bereft of her child by unfeeling cupidity? If blood cry to God, surely that sigh will be heard in heaven.—*Dr. Channing.*

Exclamation is the outburst of some sudden emotion in narrative; e. g:—

Prithee, lead me in,
And take an inventory of all I have,
To the last penny; 'tis the king's; my robe,
And my integrity to heaven, is all
I dare now call my own. O Cromwell, Cromwell,
Had I but served my God with half the zeal
I served my king, He would not in mine age
Have left me naked to mine enemies!

Henry VIII.

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In addition to the ordinary Figures of Speech already enumerated, there are certain other modes of expression used in both poetry and prose which require explanation here.

A Euphemism is an expression in which the offensiveness of a thought is somewhat hidden; e. g. 'I'm afraid your memory fails you,' when you mean that the person has told you a lie. 'He has gone to that other world which is not heaven.'

Euphuism is a ridiculously ornate mode of speaking, abounding in conceits and classical allusions, which was much in vogue with the courtiers and wits about the time of Queen Elizabeth. It takes its name from a work entitled '*Euphues*, or the Anatomy of Wit,' which was written by John Lyly, a minor dramatist of that age. Shakspere frequently makes use of it, but more in ridicule than in earnest. In Sir Walter Scott's *Monastery*, we have the very finest specimens of it in the language of Sir Percie Shafton; e. g.:—

> 'And now, having wished to my fairest Discretion those pleasant dreams which wave their pinions around the couch of sleeping beauty, and to this comely damsel the bounties of Morpheus, and to all others the common good-night, I will crave your leave to depart to my place of rest.'

Paronomasia, i. e. a play upon words. This is such a frequent form of wit, both in poetry and prose, and strikes so naturally the understanding of every one, that exemplification of it is, perhaps, unnecessary. Of all our writers none employs it more, or appears to take greater delight in ringing the changes on the various shades of meaning or application of individual words, than the greatest master of all, Shakspere himself. And this form of pleasantry is so popular that, in spite of Dr. Johnson's famous dictum, that 'the man who makes a pun would pick a pocket,' puns will continue to be made even by men of genius, and the fun that often lurks in the meaning of individual words will still be called out by every writer when appealing to the comic side of human nature. The difference between a play upon words, properly so called, and a mere pun, which is a much lower kind of wit, should be clearly kept in view; the first two examples are of the former kind, what follows of the latter:—

Lear. Read.

Glo'ster. What, with a case of eyes? (*His eyes had been put out.*)

Lear. O, ho, are you there with me? No eyes in your head, nor no money in your purse? Your eyes are in a

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heavy case, your purse in a light: yet you see how this world goes.

Glo'ster. I see it feelingly.—*Shakspere.*

And his cheek, instead of a healthy hue,
As yellow as any guinea grew,
Making the common phrase seem true
About a rich complexion.

Hood.

If their 'offence be rank,' should mine be rancour?

Ibid.

She went and told the Sexton,
And the Sexton tolled the bell.

Ibid.

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QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES.

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QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES.

1. What does the word *Poetry* mean in its widest sense? How is it distinguished from *Prose* with respect to its form? What broad distinctions exist between the two in regard to their aim and subject-matter?

What is the distinctive mark of English poetry? of Classical? of Hebrew? of Anglo-Saxon?

Mark the accent and quantity of the following verses:—

> These, equal syllables alone require,
> Though oft the ear the open vowels tire;
> With expletives their feeble aid do join,
> And ten low words oft creep in one dull line.
>
> *Pope.*

> Our greatness will appear
> Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,
> Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse,
> We can create.
>
> *Milton.*

2. Define Rhyme. Find perfect rhymes to the following words: rays, caught, brief, tooth, plaid, hearth, prayer, cows, disgust, view; hearken, gliding, danger, pliant, wrinkle, sleepless, orphan; numberless, merrily, fortunate, flourishing, wanderer.

What marked peculiarities do you find in the following extracts:—

> A man of riches, bluff and big,
> With clean brown broad-cloth, and with white cut wig.
>
> *Crabbe.*

> He loved
> Tempestuous night—the conflict and the sounds
> That live in darkness.
>
> *Wordsworth.*

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My rugged rimes are all too rude and bace.

Spenser.

She stretcheth out her hands to the poor;
Yea, she stretcheth forth her hands to the needy.
She is not afraid of the snow for her household;
For all her household are clothed with scarlet.
Her husband is known in the gates;
Where he sitteth among the elders of the land.
She openeth her mouth with wisdom;
And in her tongue is the law of kindness.
She looketh well to the ways of her household;
And eateth not the bread of idleness.
Her children arise up, and call her blessed;
Her husband also, and he praiseth her.

Proverbs xxxi.

Great Cibber's brazen, brainless brothers stand.

Pope.

3. What was the nature of the earliest literary compositions? Trace the origin of Epic and Dramatic poetry.

What kind of poems are included under the term *Lyric*? Distinguish Elegy, Song, Hymn, Ballad.

State the main differences between the Classical and the Gothic dramas. What is the modern distinction between Tragedy and Comedy? What are the Unities, Mysteries, Moralities, Interludes?

Define *Epic* poetry. Name the chief epics of European literature. What are Romantic epics, Poetical romances, Burlesque epics?

Mention some of the chief *Descriptive* poems in English. What constitutes *Pastoral* poetry?

Distinguish between *Didactic* and *Satirical* poetry. Enumerate the chief specimens of each.

What is a *Sonnet*, an *Epigram*, an *Epitaph*? To which kind do the following examples belong?—

Come, gentle sleep! attend thy votary's prayer,
And, though death's image, to my couch repair;
How sweet, though lifeless, yet with life to lie,
And, without dying, O how sweet to die!

Peter Pindar (Dr. John Wolcot).

Underneath this sable hearse
Lies the subject of all verse,

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Sydney's sister, Pembroke's mother;
Death! ere thou hast slain another,
Learned, fair, and good as she,
Time shall throw his dart at thee.

Ben Jonson.

ON SHAKSPERE.

The soul of man is larger than the sky,
Deeper than ocean or the abysmal dark
Of the unfathomed centre. Like the ark,
Which in its sacred hold uplifted high,
O'er the drowned hills, the human family,
And stock reserved of every living kind,
So, in the compass of the single mind,
The seeds and pregnant forms in essence lie
That make all worlds. Great poet! 'twas thy art
To know thyself, and in thyself to be
Whate'er love, hate, ambition, destiny,
Or the firm, fatal purpose of the heart,
Can make of man. Yet thou wert still the same,
Serene of thought, unhurt by thine own flame.

Hartley Coleridge.

4. Define Metre, Rhythm, Verse, Cæsura. What is a foot in poetry? Mention, and give examples of, the different kinds of dissyllabic and trissyllabic feet. Which is the most common measure in English poetry, and why?

Mark the cæsural pauses in the following extracts:—

Yet think not that I come to urge thy crimes;
I did not come to curse thee, Guinevere,
I, whose vast pity almost makes me die
To see thee, laying there thy golden head,
My pride in happier summers, at my feet.
The wrath which forced my thoughts on that fierce law,
The doom of treason and of flaming death,
(When first I learnt thee hidden here), is past.
The pang—which while I weighed thy heart with one
Too wholly true to dream untruth in thee,
Made my tears burn—is also past, in part.
And all is past, the sin is sinned, and I,
Lo! I forgive thee, as Eternal God
Forgives: do thou for thine own soul the rest.

Tennyson.

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Dim, as the borrowed beams of moon and stars
To lonely, weary, wandering travellers,
Is Reason to the soul; and as on high
These rolling fires discover but the sky,
Not light us here; so Reason's glimmering ray
Was lent, not to assure our doubtful way,
But guide us upward to a better day.
And as these nightly tapers disappear,
When day's bright lord ascends our hemisphere;
So pale grows Reason at Religion's sight;
So dies, and so dissolves, in supernatural light.

Dryden.

5. Scan the following *dissyllabic* metres, stating in each case whether they are iambic or trochaic, and marking those verses that are hypermetrical, or catalectic:—

They parted ne'er to meet again!
But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining.
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs that had been rent asunder;
A dreary sea now flows between.
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been.

Coleridge.

The mountains look on Marathon,
And Marathon looks on the sea;
And musing there an hour alone,
I thought that Greece might still be free;
For standing on the Persians' grave,
I could not deem myself a slave.

Byron.

Sweet bird! thy bower is ever green,
Thy sky is ever clear;
Thou hast no sorrow in thy song,
No Winter in thy year.

Logan.

Mild offspring of a dark and sullen sire!
Whose modest form, so delicately fine,
Was nursed in whirling storms,
And cradled in the winds.

Kirke White.

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Shall I, wasting in despair,
Die because a woman 's fair?
Or my cheeks make pale with care
'Cause another's rosy are?
Be she fairer than the day
Or the flowery meads in May—
If she be not so to me,
What care I how fair she be?

Wither.

Is there a man whose judgment clear
Can others teach the course to steer,
Yet runs himself life's mad career
Wild as the wave?
Here pause, and, through the starting tear,
Survey this grave.

Burns.

Weep no more, or sigh, or moan,
Grief recalls no hour that's gone;
Violets plucked, the sweetest rain
Makes not fresh or grow again.

Beaumont and Fletcher.

Howe'er it be, it seems to me
'Tis only noble to be good.
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood.

Tennyson.

I think of thee, my sister,
In my sad and lonely hours;
And the thought of thee comes o'er me,
Like the breath of morning flowers.
Like music that enchants the ear,
Like sights that bless the eye,
Like the verdure of the meadow,
Like the azure of the sky;
Like rainbow in the evening,
Like blossom on the tree,
Is the thought of thee, dear Charlotte,
Is the tender thought of thee.

Moultrie.

At once on all her stately gates arose the answering fires;
At once the wild alarum clashed from all her reeling spires;

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From all the batteries of the Tower pealed loud the voice of fear,
And all the thousand masts of Thames sent back a louder cheer.
Macaulay.

Be still, sad heart, and cease repining;
Behind the clouds is the sun still shining;
Thy fate is the common fate of all,
Into each life some rain must fall,
Some days must be dark and dreary.
Longfellow.

I hold it true, whate'er befall;
I feel it when I sorrow most;
'Tis better to have loved and lost,
Than never to have loved at all.
Tennyson.

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying:
And this same flower that smiles to-day,
To-morrow will be dying.
Herrick.

The deil he could na scaith thee,
Or aught that wad belang thee;
He'd look into thy bonnie face,
And say, 'I canna wrang thee.'
Burns.

See the mountains kiss high heaven,
And the waves clasp one another;
No sister flower would be forgiven
If it disdained its brother:
And the sunlight clasps the earth,
And the moonbeams kiss the sea—
What are all their kissings worth
If thou kiss not me?
Shelley.

There's not a joy the world can give like that it takes away,
When the glow of early thought declines in feeling's dull decay;
'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the blush alone which fades so fast,
But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth itself be past.
Byron.

But peaceful was the night,
Wherein the Prince of Light
His reign of peace upon the Earth began:

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The winds with wonder whist,
Smoothly the waters kist,
Whispering new joys to the mild ocean,
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmèd wave.

Milton.

6. What constitutes *Blank Verse*? Enumerate the poets who have largely employed it. On what ground do you pronounce it the finest English metre? Mention the chief licenses allowed in it. Scan the following examples, marking any irregularities in them:—

Sweet is the breath of morn; her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the sun,
When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
Glistering with dew: fragrant the fertile earth
After short showers; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful evening mild; then silent night,
With this his solemn bird, and this fair morn,
And these the gems of heaven, his starry train.

Milton.

O, it is excellent
To have a giant's strength; but it is tyrannous
To use it as a giant.
Could great men thunder
As Jove himself does, Jove would ne'er be quiet,
For every pelting, petty officer
Would use his heaven for thunder;
Nothing but thunder! Merciful Heaven,
Thou rather with thy sharp and sulphurous bolt
Split'st the unwedgeable and gnarled oak
Than the soft myrtle: but man, proud man,
Drest in a little brief authority,
Most ignorant of what he 's most assured,
His glassy essence, like an angry ape
Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven
As make the angels weep.

Measure for Measure.

Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains, and of all that we behold
From this green earth; and of all the mighty world

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Of eye and ear, both what they half create
And what perceive; well pleased to recognise
In nature, and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart and soul,
Of all my moral being.

Wordsworth.

7. What trissyllabic feet are used in English Verse? Which of them are most common? Show why trissyllabic measures are more irregular than dissyllabic ones.

Scan the following specimens, and state what the general character of the rhythm is in each case:—

At the close of the day, when the hamlet is still,
And mortals the sweets of forgetfulness prove,
When nought but the torrent is heard on the hill,
And nought but the nightingale's song in the grove.

Beattie.

Come as the winds come, when
Forests are rended;
Come as the waves come, when
Navies are stranded:
Faster come, faster come,
Faster and faster,
Chief, vassal, page and groom,
Tenant and master.

Scott.

I am cheerful, young man, Father William replied,
Let the cause thy attention engage;
In the days of my youth I remembered my God,
And He hath not forgotten my age.

Southey.

His nose, long and thin,
Grows down to his chin;
His chin will not stay,
But meets it half way.

Swift.

Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle
Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime,
Where the rage of the vulture, the love of the turtle,
Now melt into sorrow, now madden to crime.

Byron.

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Saw ye my wee thing, saw ye my ain thing,
  Saw ye my true love down on yon lea—
Crossed she the meadow yestreen at the gloaming,
  Sought she the burnie where flowers the haw-tree
Her hair it is lint-white, her skin it is milk white,
  Dark is the blue of her soft rolling e'e;
Red, red are her ripe lips, and sweeter than roses,
  Where could my wee thing wander frae me?

Hector Macneill.

There came to the beach a poor exile of Erin,
  The dew on his thin robe was heavy and chill;
For his country he sighed, when at twilight repairing,
  To wander alone by the wind-beaten hill.

Campbell.

For after the rain, when, with never a stain,
  The pavilion of heaven is bare,
And the winds and the sunbeams, with their convex gleams,
  Build up the blue dome of air,
I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,
  And out of the caverns of rain,
Like a child from the womb, like a ghost from the tomb,
  I rise and upbuild it again.

Shelley.

She looks, and her heart is in heaven: but they fade,
The mist and the river, the hill and the shade;
The stream will not flow, and the hill will not rise,
And the colours have all passed away from her eyes.

Wordsworth.

O talk not to me of a name great in story;
The days of our youth are the days of our glory;
And the myrtle and ivy of sweet two-and-twenty
Are worth all your laurels, though ever so plenty.

Byron.

Who is she, the poor maniac, whose wildly-fixed eyes
  Seem a heart overcharged to express?
She weeps not, yet often and deeply she sighs;
She never complains, but her silence implies
  The composure of settled distress.

Southey.

Shall I ask the brave soldier who fights by my side
  In the cause of mankind, if our creeds do agree?
Shall I give up the friend I have valued and tried,
  If he kneel not before the same altar as me?

Moore.

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When the fierce north wind, with his airy forces,
Rears up the Baltic in a foaming fury,
And the red lightning, with a storm of hail, comes
Rushing amain down,
How the poor sailors stand amazed and tremble,
While the hoarse thunder, like a bloody trumpet,
Roars a loud onset to the gaping waters,
Quick to devour them!

Isaac Watts.

8. What is a Stanza? What constitutes the Spenserian stanza, Ottava rima, Terza rima, the Elegiac, and Ballad stanzas? Name the following varieties:—

She dwelt among the untrodden ways,
Beside the springs of Dove,
A maid whom there were none to praise,
And very few to love.
A violet by a mossy stone,
Half hidden from the eye,
Fair as the star when only one
Is shining in the sky.

Wordsworth.

Ah! who can tell how hard it is to climb
The steep where Fame's proud temple shines afar;
Ah! who can tell how many a soul sublime
Has felt the influence of malignant star,
And waged with Fortune an eternal war;
Checked by the scoff of Pride, by Envy's frown,
And Poverty's unconquerable bar,
In life's low vale remote has pined alone,
Then dropped into the grave, unpitied and unknown.

Beattie.

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

Gray.

'Twas twilight, and the sunless day went down
Over the waste of waters; like a veil
Which, if withdrawn, would but disclose the frown
Of one whose hate is masked but to assail.

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Thus to their hopeless eyes the night was shown,
And grimly darkled o'er the faces pale,
And the dim, desolate deep: twelve days had Fear
Been their familiar, and now Death was here.

Byron.

A still small voice spake unto me,
'Thou art so full of misery,
Were it not better not to be?'

Then to the still small voice I said:
'Let me not cast in endless shade
What is so wonderfully made.'

Tennyson.

Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon
How can ye bloom sae fair!
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae fu' o' care!

Burns.

9. What are *Figures of Speech*? Why are they so frequently used in poetry? Name the figures of Orthography and Syntax made use of in the following passages:—

(*Avarice.*)

His life was nigh unto death's dore yplast,
And thred-bare cote, and cobled shoes he ware;
Ne scarce good morsell all his life did tast;
But both from backe and bellie still did spare,
To fill his bags, and richesse to compare;
Yet childe ne kinsman living had he none
To leave them to; but thorough daily care
To get, and nightly feare to lose, his owne,
He lad a wretched life, unto himselfe unknowne.

Spenser.

Whereat he wondered much, and gan enquere
What stately building durst so high extend
Her lofty towres into the starry sphere,
And what unknowen nation there empeopled were.

Ibid.

What is Aposiopesis, Hyperbaton, Enallage, Pleonasm, Anacoluthon? Point out the use of these in the following examples:—

No, you unnatural hags,
I will have such revenges on you both,
That all the world shall—I will do such things—

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What they are yet I know not; but they shall be
The terrors of the earth.

King Lear.

Thus they in heaven, above the starry sphere,
Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent,
Meanwhile upon the firm opaceous globe
Of this round world, whose first convex divides
The luminous inferior orbs, enclosed
From Chaos, and the inroad of darkness old,
Satan alighted walks.

Milton.

Hadst thou been aught but gossamer, feathers, air,
So many fathoms down precipitating
Thou hadst shivered like an egg.

King Lear.

Glories, like glow-worms, afar off shine bright;
But, looked to near, have neither heat nor light.

John Webster.

The good he scorned,
Stalked off reluctant, like an ill-used ghost,
Not to return; or if it did, in visits,
Like those of angels, short and far between.

Blair.

10. Trace the origin and the gradual increasing use of the most common Figures of Rhetoric. Distinguish clearly between Simile, Metaphor, and Personification, and point out the examples of each in the following extracts:[1]—

That maiden's eyes are the pearls of dew,
And her cheek the moss-rose opening new;
Her smile is the sun-blink on the brae,
When the shower is past and the cloud away.

Hogg.

Joys that faded like the morning dew.

Campbell.

Despair
Tended the sick busiest from couch to couch;
And over them triumphant Death his dart

[1] A variety of exercises may be given upon these figures, such as turning the similes into metaphors, and *vice versâ*; and, to show the great beauty they add to the bare thought, the metaphors should be destroyed; e.g. Joys that faded *imperceptibly*.

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Shook, but delayed to strike, though oft invoked
With vows as their chief good, and final hope.

Milton.

But look the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill.

Hamlet.

Glory is like a circle in the water,
Which never ceaseth to enlarge itself,
Till, by broad spreading, it disperse to nought.

Henry VI., Part 1.

Lowliness is young ambition's ladder.

Julius Cæsar.

With a frown,
Revenge impatient rose:
He threw his blood-stained sword, in thunder, down,
And, with a withering look,
The war-denouncing trumpet took.

Collins.

That vixen tongue of yours, my dear,
Alarms your neighbours far and near;
'Tis like a rolling river,
That murmuring flows and flows for ever!
Ne'er tired, perpetual discord sowing;
Like fame, it gathers strength by going.

Gay.

When fine days are few,
And the far mountains wax a little hoary,
And clap a white cape on their mantles blue.

Byron.

And, as a child, when scaring sounds molest,
Clings close and closer to the mother's breast,
So the loud torrent and the whirlwind's roar,
But bind him to his native mountains more.

Goldsmith.

Distinguish between the different kinds of *Metonomy* in the following examples:—

Even stooping age is here; and infant hands
Trail the long rake.

Thomson.

Thy wish was father, Harry, to thy thought:
I stay too long by thee, I weary thee.
Dost thou so hunger for my empty chair,
That thou wilt needs invest thee with mine honours
Before thy hour is ripe?

Henry IV., Part 2.

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In vain the sight, dejected to the ground,
Stoops for relief.

Thomson.

Bring some covering for this naked soul.

King Lear.

You gallant Vernon, pitying, saw
To infant weakness sunk the warrior's arm;
Saw the deep-racking pang, the ghastly form,
The lip pale quivering, and the beamless eye
No more with ardour bright: you heard the groans
Of agonising ships.

Thomson.

To whose young love
The vines of France and milk of Burgundy
Strive to be interess'd.

King Lear.

Define Irony, Hyperbole, Antithesis, Climax. Distinguish between Metaphor and Allegory. What is the opposite to Hyperbole called? Attach the proper names to the figures in the following examples:—

Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather
The multitudinous sea incarnadine,
Making the green one red.

Beauty unadorned 's adorned the most.

Thomson.

Grave without dulness, learned without pride,
Exact, yet not precise, though meek, keen-eyed.

Cowper.

As valiant as the wrathful dove, or most magnanimous mouse.

Shakspere.

Why, all delights are vain; but that most vain,
Which with pain purchased doth inherit pain:
As, painfully to pore upon a book
To seek the light of truth; while truth the while
Doth falsely blind the eyesight of his look:
Light seeking light doth light of light beguile;
So, ere you find where light in darkness lies,
Your light grows dark by losing of your eyes.

Love's Labour's Lost.

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Her angel face,
As the great eye of heaven shined bright,
And made a sunshine in a shadie place.

Spenser.

O majestic Night!
Nature's great ancestor! Day's elder born!
And fated to survive the transient sun!
By mortals and immortals seen with awe!
A starry crown thy raven brow adorns,
An azure zone thy waist; clouds, in heaven's loom
Wrought through varieties of shape and shade,
In ample folds of drapery divine,
Thy flowing mantle form, and, heaven throughout,
Voluminously pour thy pompous train:
Thy gloomy grandeurs—Nature's most august
Inspiring aspect!

Young.

'Thou art swift, O Morar! as a roe on the desert, terrible as a meteor of fire. Thy wrath was as the storm. Thy sword in battle as lightning in the field. Thy voice was a stream after rain; like thunder on distant hills.'—*Macpherson.*

If he were honester, he were much goodlier.

Shakspere.

Go to, then; you come to me, and you say,
'Shylock, we would have monies!'—you say so;
You that did void your rheum upon my beard,
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur
Over your threshold; monies is your suit.
What should I say to you? Should I not say,
'Hath a dog money? Is it possible
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?' or
Shall I bend low, and in a bondman's key,
With bated breath and whispering humbleness,
Say this—
'Fair Sir, you spat upon me on Wednesday last;
You spurned me such a day; another time
You called me dog; and for these courtesies
I'll lend you thus much monies?'

Merchant of Venice.

'I'm weary of living,' the woodman cried,
As he tottered along the road;
'For the sake of a miserable crust of bread,
I'd rather a thousand times be dead,
Than carry this wearisome load:

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'Come Death! come Death!' and down he sat
Upon his bundle of wood,—
'Come Death, and ease me of woe and want!'
And, straight, a skeleton grim and gaunt,
Beside the old man stood.

'Well, what do you wish?' the skeleton asked,
For I heard you just complain;'
'Oh, I wish,' said the man, with a ghastly face,
'If you please, I wish you to help me to place
This load on my shoulders again.'

Anon.

I own I like not Johnson's turgid style,
That gives an inch the importance of a mile;
Casts of manure a wagon-load around,
To raise a simple daisy from the ground;
Uplifts the club of Hercules—for what?
To crush a butterfly or brain a gnat;
Creates a whirlwind from the earth, to draw
A goose's feather, or exalt a straw;
Sets wheels on wheels in motion—such a clatter,
To force up one poor nipperkin of water;
Bids ocean labour with tremendous roar,
To heave a cockle-shell upon the shore;
Alike in every theme his pompous art,
Heaven's awful thunder or a rumbling cart!

Wolcot.

They never fail who die
In a great cause: the block may soak their gore;
Their heads may sodden in the sun; their limbs
Be strung to city gates and castle walls—
But still their spirit walks abroad. Though years
Elapse, and others share as dark a doom,
They but augment the deep and sweeping thoughts
Which o'erpower all others, and conduct
The world at last to freedom.

Byron.

Enumerate, and give examples of, as many of the *Poetical licenses* as you can.

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